

WYCOMBE THROW AWAY A POINT

By Chiltern

Wycombe Wanderers 1, Oxford City 1

WITH just 60 seconds of this Boxing Day Isthmian League game to go Wycombe Wanderers were winning 1-0. Then their skipper, Dave Bradshaw, broke up an Oxford attack, came out with the ball, turned round and rolled it past his startled goalkeeper into the net.

A minute later he was apologising to his team-mates in the dressing room. "I thought I heard John Maskell shout for it," he told me. "So I turned round and passed it back to him. I put it to one side of him as I always do. The next thing I knew, it was in the net."

To be fair, Oxford deserved a point. They had the better of the second-half, and could not turn good approach work into goals. Wanderers had dominated the first-half when they went ahead through a Samuel's goal.

The whole game was played at half-speed on the bone-hard ice covered pitch. It was good, clean football and good Christmas entertainment.

Whether the game should ever have been played is debatable. As it was if either side had started rough tackling I think the referee would have abandoned the proceedings.

And the players realised this. If any real needle had crept in there could have been some nasty injuries. So they kept to the old pals' act.

Much of the game was real Chaplinesque as the players struggled to keep their feet after missing a tackle, or tried to change direction in a hurry.

It was a merry romp with the carol-singing Wycombe fans providing much of the entertainment.

Wanderers went ahead in the 12th minute. Jackson blocked a Horseman shot and Samuels was on hand to bang the rebound home. The goal can be described as fortunate as, had Shippey made any effort, he would probably have stopped it. As it was he stood and watched it pass him.

TIPPED OVER

Wycombe had the better of the opening exchanges, and it was 17 minutes before Oxford won a corner. The best Oxford effort of the first-half came from left-half Morton, who hit a hard one from outside the penalty area after Beck had been robbed by Bricknell. Maskell did well to tip the shot over.

Merrick had another good game on the left-wing, never afraid to cut in and have a go himself, and Worley, when he was not amusing the crowd with balancing acts on the ice, showed some nice touches.

After the interval Oxford kept possession for long periods but did not look dangerous in front of goal. They can be thankful that Bradshaw was full of the Christmas spirit.

Maskell made a diving save to Bradbury, but apart from that was not troubled much. For Wycombe it was the wingers who had most shots. Samuels worked hard, and Horseman gave his injured leg a quiet outing.

Wycombe.—J. Maskell; D. Bradshaw, J. Beck; B. Baker, I. Rundle, C. Gale; L. Worley, K. Samuels, P. Bates, T. Horseman, L. Merrick.

Oxford.—J. Shippey; R. Jackson, G. Pullin; J. Lamb, J. Shufflebotham, S. Morton; B. Bricknell, T. Bradbury, J. Woodley, J. Whiffen, P. Hutchinson.